

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend paragraph [0011] as follows:

[0011] Traditionally, materials such as organophilic clays have been added to non-aqueous drilling fluids to increase flow properties and reduce the settling of solids. Black materials such as finely ground asphalts, modified asphalts, gilsonite, lignite, modified lignite, graphite, ground tires, or combination of thereof have been added to the drilling fluids to lower fluid loss. However, those materials ~~do not always work in the actual operation or they~~ sometimes cannot be used in some areas due to environmental concerns or variations in quality. A need therefore exists to develop a material that increases flow properties and reduces settling and also lowers fluid loss over a wide range of conditions.

Please amend paragraph [0016] as follows:

[0016] One component of the drilling fluid composition of this invention is the non-aqueous base fluid. The non-aqueous base fluid can be any non-aqueous fluid known to those of ordinary skill in the art and suitable for use as a base drilling fluid. For example, the non-aqueous base fluid can include oils (e.g., diesel oils, mineral oils, and poly(alphaolefin)), propylene glycol, methyl glucoside, modified esters and ethers, and oil-based emulsions of oil and water of varying proportions. In some cases, drilling fluid compositions contain a mixture of ~~base fluids~~, in which case the drilling fluid composition is generally classified by the predominating fluid ~~or continuous~~ in the base fluid. The base fluid can be chosen based upon the particular properties that the base fluid will provide to the drilling fluid composition to which it is added. Thus, the choice of base fluid for the drilling fluid composition of this invention may vary depending upon the application or conditions in which the drilling fluid composition is to be used.

Please amend paragraph [0025] as follows:

[0025] The copolymers can be of any desired size. In some embodiments of the invention, the copolymers have an average molecular weight of greater than about 20,000. In other embodiments of the invention, the copolymers have an average molecular weight of greater

than about 21,000, and in yet other embodiments the copolymers have an average molecular weight of greater than about 25,000. All molecular weights referred to herein refer to weight average (W_m) molecular weights.

Please amend paragraph [0034] as follows:

[0034] In some embodiments, the drilling fluid composition includes one or more black materials. The addition of the black material to the drilling fluid composition may beneficially alter certain properties of the drilling fluid composition. For example, the addition of black materials has been shown to reduce the high pressure high temperature fluid loss (HPHTFL) and increase the lubricity of certain drilling fluid compositions. The black materials that are added to a drilling fluid composition ~~may include, for example, are selected from the group consisting of~~ lignite, salt of lignite, organophilic lignite, asphalt, salt of sulfonated asphalt, gilsonite, graphite, ground tires, or any combination thereof.